

San Marcos Public Library

Policy on Children's Services and Materials

The following policy has been adopted by the San Marcos Public Library Board as authorized by Section 2.298 of the City of San Marcos Code of Ordinances. This policy is to be considered the official position of the library.

A. The library's primary service goals to children are to:

- provide guidance and assistance to children seeking information and reading materials;
- provide instruction in the use of the library and basic library tools (catalog, Reader's Guide, etc.);
- stimulate interest in reading through programs, activities, storytimes, puppet shows, etc.;
- create a positive relationship between the child and the library.

B. The children's collection will be developed to provide a selection of materials designed to:

- make accessible to children, and adults working with children, a collection of books and audiovisual materials representing a broad range of interests;
- promote the enjoyment and appreciation of reading in children as a voluntary activity;
- meet the special interests and information needs of children;
- stimulate in young readers imagination, mental and personal growth.

C. Selection of materials for the children's collection is governed by the same guidelines which apply to selection of all materials for the library (literary quality, reputation of the author, accuracy of information, potential usefulness, popular appeal, contemporary significance, evaluation in reputable review sources, etc.)

In addition, the following specific guidelines govern selection of materials for the children's collection:

- Materials will be selected which are appropriate for the different reading levels found among children. Special emphasis will be placed on acquiring books for beginning readers, because of the high demand in this area;
- The library will provide a collection of Spanish language and bi-lingual children's books and materials;
- Abridgements of literacy classics or books which do not meet the highest literacy standards will be selected if they serve as stepping stones to better reading, or are unique in fulfilling special emotional, recreational or informational needs of children;

- Reputation of the illustrator, as well as the author, will be considered in book selection;
- Textbooks will be excluded from the collection except when they offer the best available coverage of the subject matter;
- Though the collection makes no attempt to be comprehensive in nature, books of lasting literary value, or historic interest, whose current use is slight, will be retained in the collection;
- The collection will be systematically weeded of out-dated and worn materials, and of materials of little demand, in accordance with accepted library practices.

D. As a subscriber to the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement, the library makes no attempt to monitor or supervise an individual's selection of materials from the collection. Patrons of all ages are free to borrow materials from either the adult or children's area of the library.

Parents who wish to prevent their child from checking out materials which they consider inappropriate are expected to provide sufficient supervision of their child to accomplish this. Library staff will provide parents with access to reviews of books, CDs, and movies in order to help them make appropriate selections for their child. Parents may also request that a restriction be placed on their child's library card which would prohibit the card from being used to borrow materials based on their media type (e.g.: a restriction on borrowing DVDs, CDs, etc). Content-based restrictions will not be offered.

E. Withdrawal of services:

- The use of the library or its services may be denied for due cause. Such cause may be failure to return books or to pay replacement costs, destruction of library property, or disturbance of other users, etc.
- The library has neither the intent nor the staff to monitor children's behavior within the library building nor on the library grounds. Children exhibiting inappropriate behavior for the public library environment, i.e. loud talking, running, playing, etc., will be asked to leave the library. If repeated disruptive behavior occurs, the child's parents will be formally notified. The library can not accept responsibility for children's action or behavior while using library facilities.

Adopted March 1980
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